

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 NEA-10 ISO-00 SAM-01 IO-11 DHA-02

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DLOS-04 OFA-01

SCCT-01 /095 W

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R 091616Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4169

INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

USMISSION NATO

USCINCEUR

USCINCUSNAVEUR

USMISSION USUN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SS, SP, UN

SUBJ: SAHARA: LATEST DEVELOPMENTS AS SEEN FROM MADRID

SUMMARY: SPANISH PRSS REPORTS F POLISARIO IS GAINING INCREASING
RECOGNITION AND MAURITANIA IS INCREASINGLY IN A BIND ABOUT ITS
CAPABILITY TO TAKE OVER ITS SHARE OF SAHARA. MOROCCO
HAS REPORTEDLY OCCUPIED VILLA CISNEROS AND PRESIDENT
OF YEMAA -- THE AGREED VEHICLE FOR CONSULTATION OF SAHARA
VIEWS -- HAS SAID THAT ALL OF TERRITORY BELONGS TO MOROCCO. BY
SEIZING SOVIET FISHING VESSEL AND WARNING OFF "SEVERAL"
SPANISH FISHING SHIPS, MOROCCO HAS IN EFFECT ASSERTED ITS
SOVEREIGNTY OVER SAHARA WATERS. SPAIN AND MOROCCO
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CONTINUE TO PUT BEST LIGHT ON BILATERAL RELATIONS

DESPITE THIS CONTRETEMPS. END SUMMARY

1. SPANISH PRESS HAS REPORTED THAT F POLISARIO LEADERS HELD MEETING WITH FLN AND PLO LEADERS IN ALGERIA AND ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE DEC 28 DEFENDING SAHARAN RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION, ACCORDING TO PRESS THIS MEETING COULD SET THE STAGE FOR THE SAHARAN PROVISIONAL NATIONAL COUNCIL FORMED AT GUELTA NOV 28 TO ANNOUNCE ITSELF AT THE JAN 10 OAU MEETING IN ADDIS ABABA AS A PROVISIONAL GOVT DESERVING OF RECOGNITION BY ALL STATES WHICH SUPPORT THE PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION. MEANWHILE, JAN 7 "NUEVO DIARIO" HAS PHOTO OF DVN GEN.GIAP WITH F POLISARIO LEADER EL OUALI AND MEDIA REPORT THAT PRO -F POLISARIO GROUPS HAVE BEEN FORMED IN CANARY ISLANDS AND VARIOUS PARTS OF SPAIN TO SUPPLY FUNDS FOR INSURGENTS.

2. NEWS REPORTS JAN 9 FROM EL AAIUN SAY THAT A MOROCCAN COLUMN WITH OVER 100 VEHICLES HAS OCCUPIED VILLA CISNEROS, APPARENTLY TO TAKE OVER TOWN FROM SPANIARDS WHO ARE SCHEDULED TO DEPART PRIOR TO JAN 15. F POLISARIO IS REPORTED TO HAVE CONCENTRATED FORCES SOME 75 KMS. EAST OF CITY WHICH IT WAS POISED TO SEIZE IF MAURITANIANS FAIL TO REACH IT BEFORE SPANISH LEAVE. LOCAL MEDIA REFER TO "REVISION OF TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT" ALLOWING MOROCCO TO TAKE OVER VILLA CISNEROS.

3. SPANISH PRESS CORRESPONDENTS REPORT THAT PRESIDENT OULD DADDAH HAS PROPOSED TO ALGERIA, MOROCCO, AND LIBYA A TRIPARTITE DIVISION OF SAHARA WITH A MIDDLE CHUNK AROUND MAHBES FOR THE F POLISARIO. (THIS MIGHT BE AN ALGERIAN-INSPIRED PLOY TO ELICIT MAURITANIAN COLLUSION IN EFFORT TO THWART WHAT IS SEEN AS MOROCCAN EFFORT TO TAKE OVER ENTIRE TERRITORY.

4. EL JATRI, PRESIDENT OF YEMAA WHICH TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT SPECIFIED AS VEHICLE FOR CONSULTATION ON SAHARAN DESIRES, TOLD "YA" (INDEPENDENT) JAN 5 THAT SAHARA HAS "ALWAYS BEEN MOROCCAN" AND THAT "ALL THE SAHARA HAD BECOME MOROCCAN". (ALGERIA CLAIMS TO BE HOST TO MAJORITY OF YEMAA WHO SUPPORT F POLISARIO AND COULD USE TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT'S REFERENCE TO YEMAA AS AN ARGUMENT FOR SELF-DETERMINATION OF ALL OR PART OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TERRITOTY.)

5. MOROCCAN TERRITORIAL SEAS ALONG SAHARA. "SEVERAL" SPANISH FISHING VESSELS WERE FORCIBLY OBLIGED TO LEAVE SAHARAN TERRITORIAL WATERS BY A MOROCCAN PATROL BOAT JAN 2. THIS INCIDENT TOOK PLACE SHORTLY BEFORE THE MOROCCAN SEIZURE OF A SOVIET FISHING VESSEL, REPORTEDLY OFF VILLA CISNEROS. ACCORDING TO STATEMTNT BY SPANISH SEC GEN IN

SAHARA, COL. DE VIGURI, MOROCCAN CAPTAIN ACTED OUT OF MIS-
UNDERSTANDING OF TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT. DE VIGURI ADDED
THAT SPANISH FISHING VESSELS COULD CONTINUE TO FREQUENT SAHARAN
WATERS. DE VIGURI'S REASSURANCES NOTWITHSTANDING, MANY SPANIARDS
PARTICULARLY IN MFA WHICH HARBORED DEEP SUSPICIONS ABOUT
TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT, WILL INTERPRET MOROCCAN ASSERTION OF
SOVEREIGNTY OVER SAHARAN WATERS AS INDICATION OF THINGS TO
COME IN BILATERAL RELATIONS. CANARY ISLANDS ARE ONLY 100
KMS. DISTANT FROM SAHARAN COAST, AND CANARY FISHERMEN
DEPEND FOR THEIR LIVELIHOOD ON THESE WATERS.

6. MOROCCAN MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR , DRISS BASSRI, SPENT
THE NEW YEAR IN LAS PALMAS (CANARY ISLANDS) AND REPORTEDLY
HAD THE FOLLOWING TO SAY ABOUT RELATIONS WITH SPAIN: THE
PROXIMITY OF THE CANARIES TO THE SAHARA IS ONE MORE REASON
FOR STRENGTHENING RELATIONS WITH MORROCO; "EL AAIUN WOULD BE
NOTHING WITHOUT LAS PALMAS AND IT WOULD BE GOOD TO IMPROVE
THE EXPLOITATION OF COMMON RESOURCES, FISHING AND ESPECIALLY
TOURISM." BASSRI DESCRIBED AS A "CHIMERA" ANY MOROCCAN
ATTEMPT TO CLAIM THE CANARY ISLANDS.
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